

REMARKS

Claims 43, 44/43, 47, 48, 49/47 and 49/48 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first and second paragraphs, as being incomplete for omitting essential elements, such omission amounting to a gap between elements. Claims 42-44 and 50-56 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that the Applicants regard as the invention. Claims 42-49 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the U.S. patent to Burke. Claims 42-53, 55 and 56 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the U.S. patent to Odell. For the reasons that follow, Applicants respectfully traverse these grounds for rejecting claims within the previous set of claims 42-56, and more specifically as these grounds of rejection apply to newly proposed claims 57-76. Applicants also note that the Examiner stated that claims 54/50 and 54/52 would be allowable if they were rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Enclosed new claims 57 and 58 correspond to claim 54 depending from claim 50 and to claim 54 depending from claim 52, respectively. The objected to wording concerning the opening and closing forces has been omitted in order to overcome the §112 rejections raised by the Examiner. Further, this wording is not necessary any longer because due to the definition of a bearing for connecting the steering arm and the closing lever, the bearing provides the desired relation of closing and opening forces.

Enclosed new claims 59 to 63 define embodiments of the door locks according to claims 57 and 58 comprising further bearings (see pending claims 51, 53, 55, 56; original description: page 23, lines 4-27).

The Examiner rejected pending claims 42 to 49 as to their form and also in view of Burke and Odell. The embodiments of pending claims 42 to 49 are now defined in new claims 64 to 76. In order to overcome the §112 rejections raised by the Examiner with respect to functional features in claims 42 to 49, new claims 64 to 76 define structural features essential to operate the door locks as claimed. Further, new claims 64 to 76 include “means plus function” features related to the structural features. Applicants believe these amendments will overcome the §112 rejections raised by the Examiner.

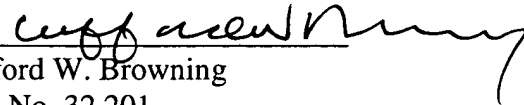
The Examiner considers claim 54 to be patentable over the cited prior art. Therefore, a discussion of patentability of new claims 57 and 58 (corresponding to pending claim 54) is not necessary.

New claims 64 to 76 are sufficiently delineated over the cited prior art of Burke and Odell. These prior art documents disclose gripping devices that merely comprise one recess (see Burke: reference numeral 37, Odell: figures 5A, 7A [reference numeral 153], 8, 8B, 11). In contrast thereto, claims 64, 68 and 72 define gripping devices 18 having two recesses 26 and 24.

The door lock defined in new claim 73 (see figures 9a-e of the application documents) also clearly differs from the cited prior art.

For all of these foregoing reasons, Applicants request entry of the new claim set, reconsideration of the application in light thereof, and allowance of new claims 57-76 over all the prior art of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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